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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/594,046	09/25/2006	Nnochiri N. Ekwuribe	014811-673.119US	8968
24239	7590	05/07/2007		
MOORE & VAN ALLEN PLLC P.O. BOX 13706 Research Triangle Park, NC 27709			EXAMINER	
			SPIVACK, PHYLLIS G	
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1614				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
05/07/2007		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/594,046	EKWURIBE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Phyllis G. Spivack	1614	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 30 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-29, 31 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ .

Applicants' Preliminary Amendment filed September 25, 2006 is acknowledged.

Updated priority information is noted. Claims 1-31 are presented and represent all of the claims under consideration.

The disclosure is objected to for the following informality: Claim 2 is incomplete.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 30 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim should only refer to other claims in the alternative. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claim 30 has not been further treated on the merits.

Claim 31 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

Claim 31 provides for the use of a pharmaceutical composition, but, since the claim does not set forth any steps involved in the method/process, it is unclear what method/process applicant is intending to encompass. A claim is indefinite where it merely recites a use without any active, positive steps delimiting how this use is actually practiced.

Claim 30 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed recitation of a use, without setting forth any steps involved in the process, results in an improper definition of a process, i.e., results in a claim which is not a proper process claim under 35 U.S.C. 101. See for example *Ex parte Dunki*, 153 USPQ 678 (Bd.App. 1967) and *Clinical Products, Ltd. v. Brenner*, 255 F. Supp. 131, 149 USPQ 475 (D.D.C. 1966).

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-29 and 31 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 7,119,119. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims of the patent are drawn to pharmaceutical compositions comprising the two therapeutic agents 4-aminophenylacetic acid and 5-aminosalicylic acid.

Claim 31 is rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 10-16 of U.S. Patent No. 6,903,082. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims of the patent are drawn to methods of treating inflammatory gastrointestinal diseases as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis

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comprising administering a pharmaceutical composition comprising the combination of 4-aminophenylacetic acid and 5-aminosalicylic acid.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-14 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ekwuribe et al., U.S. Patent 6,583,128.

Ekwuribe teaches pharmaceutical compositions comprising non-azo bonded 4-APAA and non-azo bonded 5-ASA compounds that may further comprise agents such as mesalamine, sulfasalazine, balsalazide and olsalazine for treating inflammatory gastrointestinal conditions. See column 8, lines 38-41. See Example 7, column 15, where the mixture of 5-ASA and 4-APAA is disclosed. As required by instant claim 2, steroids or antibiotics may further be included in said compositions. See column 8, lines 43-44. Dosage forms and modes of administration are disclosed in column 6, line 58, to column 8, line 12. See, in particular, lines 55-58, where formulations are disclosed that target specific organs.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-29 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ekwuribe et al., U.S. Patent 6,583,128, in view of The Merck Manual.

Ekwuribe's teachings are set forth *supra*. The claims differ with respect to sites of drug release among the stomach, small intestine and colon. However, effective medicaments demonstrating drug release at various sites in the gastrointestinal tract are known in the prior art. See the last paragraph on page 310 and the first paragraph on page 311 in The Merck Manual where hydrolysis of the azo bond of the presently claimed compounds and the enzymatic action of bacterial flora in the lower ileum and colon are discussed. Delayed-release coating, such as an acrylic polymer, or encapsulation in ethylcellulose microgranules, allows manipulation of the timing of drug release at a targeted site.

With respect to claimed drug components and dose release requirements of the components of claims 15-29, it is not inventive to discover the optimum combination of drugs or workable release sites of the drug at a particular targeted organ by routine experimentation when general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art. See *In re Aller*, 220 F.2d 454, 456, 105 USPQ 233,235 (CCPA 1955) and MPEP 2144.05(II). The determination of the optimum dose release regimen to employ with the presently claimed active agents would have been a matter well within the purview of one of ordinary skill in the art. Such determination would have been made in accordance with a variety of factors. These would have included such factors as the age, weight, sex, diet and medical condition of the patient, severity of the disease, the route of administration, pharmacological considerations, such as the activity, efficacy,

pharmacokinetics and toxicology profiles of the particular compound employed, whether a drug delivery system is utilized and whether the compound is administered a part of a drug combination. Thus, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the currently claimed specific drug and drug release parameters are not seen to be inconsistent with those that would have been determined by the skilled artisan through no more than routine experimentation.

No claim is allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Phyllis G. Spivack whose telephone number is 571-272-0585. The Examiner can normally be reached from 10:30 to 7 PM.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful after one business day, the Examiner's supervisor, Ardin Marschel, can be reached 571-272-0718. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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April 29, 2007

Phyllis Spivack

Phyllis Spivack

**PHYLLIS SPIVACK
PRIMARY EXAMINER**